

March 2003

A bimonthly newsletter
produced by Good News Unlimited



THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

Editorial



The Age of the Earth

GNU's recent involvement in the Age of the Earth debate and the accompanying video, has caused some raised eyebrows.

I believe the first chapter of Genesis when it says, God created the world in six twenty-four-hour days and rested on the seventh. I believe that in Genesis 1 and 2 God has given us all the information he considers we need to know, in order to understand how the world came into existence. The associated genealogies in various other places in Scripture, then give us an idea of how long ago it happened. This has been the basis of the Christian faith throughout the ages. Who are we in 2003 to say it is wrong? Are we to be saved by faith in a different gospel to that which saved our forebears?

Although evolution has not yet been mentioned, the acceptance of the earth being of a great age is the thin edge of the wedge for a drastic reinterpretation of Genesis 1 & 2, leading ultimately to the acceptance of the evolutionary origin of all things.

If the earth is of a great age, the problem of sin is thrown into disarray. When did it occur? How long did the world have to wait for Jesus Christ to come to save us? For the world to wait a vast length of time for salvation does not show God in a loving or caring light. This very point was put by a sceptic in a letter to *The Australian* of 27th

December 2002, where the writer said, 'In simple terms, fewer people can accept that the creator of a vast universe finished his creation, waited 15 billion years and then became a human being.' When the genealogies of the Bible infer that the age of the earth was about 4000 years when Jesus was born, God's plan of salvation becomes very loving, caring and realistic.

The great rule for the interpretation of Scripture, is that Scripture interprets itself. To use outside sources to interpret Scripture is completely unacceptable, yet, by adopting the principle that the earth is of a vast unknown age, is to hand over the interpretation of Scripture to evolutionists—the majority of whom are atheists. No Bible-believing Christian can accept this.

In the video presentation, Dr Michael Denton gave two pieces of evidence to justify the age of the earth being greater than the Bible indicates. One was tree rings of an alleged age of 20,000 years. At question time he was challenged by a Dr Warwick Armstrong, who said he had been seeking this evidence from a number of university libraries around the world and had been unable to find any reference to it. Could Dr Denton give him the references so he could find it. Unfortunately Dr Denton could not, he had only heard about it, so what he was quoting was hearsay.

The other piece of evidence he quoted, was about ice cores from the Greenland ice cap. Using some strange logic, he stressed that because he knew some of the members of the American University team who had taken these cores, then their interpretation of the rings in the ice must be true. The rings show a series of thaws and freezes and allowing for one freeze and thaw per year you can count back 40,000 years.

These people are using the evolutionary theory of uniformity claiming that there is only one thaw and one freeze per year. This theory has been shown to be invalid years ago. It is like saying an Australian summer is constantly 40 degrees day and night for 3 months straight. We all know it is not, in fact, where I live in south eastern NSW we have occasionally had a frost in mid summer. The weather the world over is quite random, even in the polar regions there are temperature variations which would cause a series of freezes and thaws each winter. If there was an average of ten per winter of 6 months duration—which is quite reasonable—the 40,000 years divided by 10, would end up 4000 years, which is well within the Biblical record.

The final thing is, no one was there taking records to verify these claims—so it is all one great big guess. And the purpose of it all is to destroy our faith in the Word of God. Our faith is too precious to allow it to be undermined or destroyed by the guesses of sceptics.

When Jesus was praying for us before going to Gethsemane, he said to the Father, 'Sanctify them with your truth. Your Word is truth' (John 17:17). Let us hold to the Word of God in it's entirety. The truth of God's word is to sanctify us, and it starts with our origins, leading to the forgiveness of our sin at Calvary.

Let us persevere to the end and receive that crown of righteousness Christ has promised.

May God bless you all

Roger Jones

Focus on the Gospel



**'Everyone that doeth
evil hateth the light . . .
but he that doeth truth
cometh to the light . . .'
(John 3:20-21)**

Dear Friend

It is commonly thought that theory and practice are two different things. People say, 'that's all right as a theory, but it's no good in practice.'

What then shall we make of Jesus' words: 'He that *doeth* the truth?' And what of his other statement, 'I am the truth.' Would such phrases mean anything at all if truth was a matter of theory alone? Perhaps the contrast between theory and practice is not as real as is supposed.

In Greek, the word for 'truth' means, 'making manifest something that was hidden.' Truth is something that needs to be uncovered. No one possesses it naturally, it lies beneath the surface

of things and must be sought.

In John's gospel, this meaning is accepted and transformed at the same time. 'I am the truth, also doing the truth' are combinations of words that show that *truth* is a thing that takes place in time; it is something that happens and which is bound to personality—a special person.

Truth in the Gospel is something new. It is something God brings to pass in the course of world events. Truth in Christianity is *life*-centered in Christ and actualised in the experience of all who connect themselves with him.

In Greek thought, truth can only be found. In the Gospel, it is found when it is found, when it is done, and done when it is found. For the Greeks, truth was a manifestation of the eternal essence of things. In the Gospel it is a new

creation springing up from the stream of history.

Since Christ has emerged, the decision for truth can never be severed from the decision for him. He cannot be merely accepted as a teacher of truth. To so regard him would be to make truth a theory and isolate it from practice. Such a severance is denied by the fourth gospel, when John calls Jesus 'truth' and when he calls Jesus' followers, those who are 'of the truth', he admits no division between truth as theory and truth as practice.

Truth is only known in a dynamic relationship with God's truth which he sent into the world. Jesus described this relationship as following him; holding to his teaching and keeping his commandments. Truth therefore *is the life*. It is not just *to think about*, but something *to be done*.

'... and the truth shall make you free ...'

May yours be a truthful existence.

Yours in service

Ron J Allen.

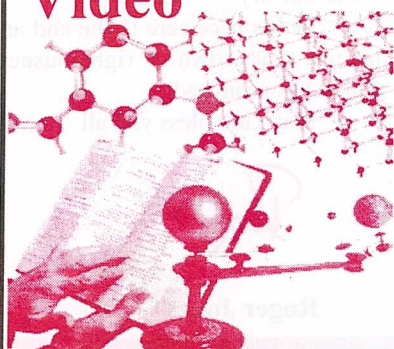


Science and the Bible

Seminar 2003

Audios and

Video



Set of three Audio
cassettes in a
presentation case

\$20.00 (PP&H included)
Order No. 2SAB004.

A Video of the Seminar
is also available

\$17.50 (PP&H included)
Order No. 3SA0001

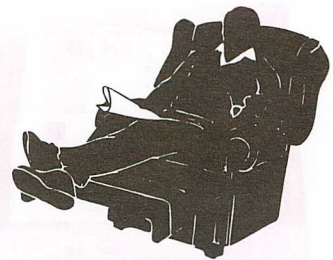
**NEW eMAIL ADDRESSES
FOR GOOD NEWS
UNLIMITED ON PAGE 8.**

Good News Unlimited Mission Statement

Christians united in offering to all meaning and direction in their lives by a knowledge of God's encounter with humanity through his Son, Jesus Christ.

In view of it's history, GNU recognises a special duty to assist Seventh-day Adventists in their journey of spiritual discovery and growth.

Take a minute with Clem...



He replied, 'My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice' (Luke 8:21).

My mother often quoted a wise saying: 'Handsome is as handsome does.' We live in an age where it is the articulate that are rewarded and recognised for their efforts and it is the verbally, skilful who win the praises of men.

People with such talents may appear to be greatly blessed, yet herein resides a deceptive illusion that is so superficial. Alarming, people may spend half their lives or more before coming to such a realisation.

The great God of the universe has always been a person of sub-

stance, no mere puff or show of words, but reaching down into the world, he became one with us, shared our griefs and carried our sorrows. It was Jesus who actually touched the leper, washed the feet of the disciples, worked in his father's carpentry shop and respected the little children.

Jesus meant no disrespect to his earthly parents in making this statement recorded in the book of Luke, he merely illustrated the Old Testament wisdom, 'As a man thinks in his heart—so is he.'

In an age of gloss and packaging, it can be quite refreshing to

discover someone unaffected by such influences, someone who cheerfully goes about their business and who can be relied upon with no thought of obtaining the credit.

Grace creates such people—God's grace. It gives people the freedom to develop and grow, to outlive and outwit mistakes. God's magnificent grace, ever flowing to his children, giving to them peace, love, joy and kindness etc., these are the characteristics of the kinfolk of Jesus.

◆ Clem Moss.

Enter Through the Narrow Gate

Anne Wortmann (nee Kane)

When I think back, I can't remember the crossroad being signposted. The high road looked narrow and tricky with sharp precipices falling away from the track in various places. The chance of a fall seemed great. Thorny bushes lined the way, escaping their scathing attacks was impossible. It would be a path requiring careful navigation, I remember thinking. Any hasty move could lead to strife.

The wider road was broad and smooth, with little chance of even turning an ankle on a contrary stone. I could see that it ended at my destination, and it was certainly the most popular route. I thought the wide road would be the one for me, so I enquired of the Lord. 'In this decision you can choose the course that I would,' Jesus said as he sat on his throne, 'or you can choose the way that is easiest for you. It is your choice, I will always love you. The course that I would choose is the one that loves, even when that love is not deserved or returned. It is the walk of a person who has found their security in me. It is the way that is not always certain, and so requires that you often stop and seek my Guidance. It is the dead-end that faith promises at the beginning of a highway through the desert. It is the daily walk of obedience that says, 'Lord, I believe that you are faithful to your word.'

I knew in my heart that the only way forward was the way that pleased my Lord. I took a deep breath, steeled myself and announced my decision to all of heaven. There was an incredible uproar as a legion of angels was commissioned for my assistance. The Holy Spirit flooded my being with new strength and a greater desire to know my God.

Jesus took my hand and what had appeared to be fearsome was now an adventure, step by step with my Lord and friend, ever closer to the promised desire of my heart.

CHRISTIAN SINGLES

Any single can join. All ages and denominations welcome.

Send for a free colour brochure

PO Box 122 WALLSEND 2287

Ph/Fax: 02 49555445

Website:

www.christiansingles.com.au

eMail:

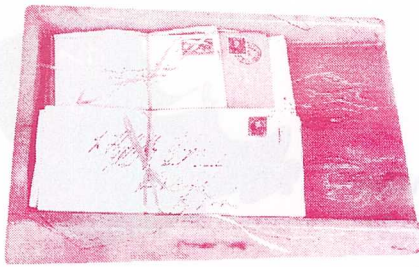
singles@christiansingles.com.au

Little Gems

Thankyou:

**For the mess to clean up after a party,
because it means that I
have been surrounded by friends.**

**For a lawn that needs mowing
and windows that need cleaning,
because it means I have a home.**



Mail

Dear GNU

Where can I read that God has changed his plans because of prayer? Can our prayers change God's plan and mind? Is this biblical?

Thank you for your thoughts.
With warm Christian love

T. V. NSW.

Dear T

No, I don't think the universe is steered by our prayers. God is in control. He knows what is best for us, if he gave us everything we prayed for the universe would be plunged into chaos. For example:

'We do not know what we ought to pray for' (Romans 8:26).

We should also add though, that just because God is not a slave to our prayers and we cannot get him to do everything we want, does not mean there is no reason to pray. Indeed, therein lies the very reason why we must pray without ceasing.

Our ideas of what is best are so meagre and ill-advised, that we should cling to God in prayer. Changes will take place, but those changes are not in God, they are in us. We are what needs to be changed.

God Bless

RON.

Dear Ron

I was reading your 'Dear Friend' letter for December 2002 and was puzzled at GNU's stance on Genesis. It occurs to me that in the debates by Dr Ford the implications of this stance are never discussed. When I was a Catholic, a Protestant gave me this poem 'What says the Bible, the blessed Bible, this my only question be. The teachings of men so often mislead me, what says the Bible to me?'

When I was thirteen years old I had just had my first snorkeling experience at Kingscliff. After this I commenced grade eight at a Catholic high school. When we came to our

science subject I can clearly remember how the science book said that fossils were formed. It stated that an animal dies, sinks to the bottom and is covered by ooze and over a long period of time calcifies and forms a fossil. This idea is repeated on a sign to this day at the Taronga Park Zoo.

I stood up and explained to my science teacher that what was written does not seem right, as I had just learned to snorkel and creatures in the ocean that die rarely sink. Not only that, but those that do sink to the bottom, do not wait around to be fossilised, but are eaten and broken down by other creatures and currents. My teacher informed me of the qualifications of the writer of the book and said that we just had to accept what was written. I could not do this.

Later in life this episode made me realise that everyone had prejudices and a belief system. We do not see the world as it is, but as we are (i.e.-believe). The person who wrote the book was only repeating what he has accepted as truth. Now we know that fossils are formed when a creature is covered soon after, or while alive, to give an anaerobic environment. My point? I, as a thirteen year old, was right and the person with a masters degree in science was wrong.

The question is not one of science, but whether the Scriptures can be trusted. If God used evolution, then where does that leave Paul in Romans 5:12 & 19? As they have found evidence of violence, disease (including cancer and arthritis) suffering, extinction and death in dinosaur bones, that means that these things existed before Adam (whatever he was). Paul was wrong. Death was created by God and called very good. Was Carl Sagan right when he said that 'the Christian God was a sloppy workman requiring a 99% extinction rate to accomplish his ends?'

I see a lot death in my job, Ron, and it is not very good. Just recently my sister-in-law died of cancer and I

had to also put our dog down. My question is, should not we as Christians, apologise to Satan for the way the Christian Church has misrepresented him? He is not the author of death, pain and disease—God is, if evolution is true. How could we possibly be accused of guilt with an ancestry like that!

While I do not accept the teachings of Bishop Spong, he is at least consistent. On ABC's 'Compass' he quoted Darwin that 'humans beings are an unfinished creation', therefore, to reason that man somehow fell from a non-existent perfect state and Jesus had to come and die for him is ridiculous. Original sin is really only our God-given 'survival of the fittest' urge, and to say that Jesus had to save us from an urge he created is nonsensical. Can you see what deep waters we are in here?

Let's face it, if we can reinterpret Genesis from science, we can also reinterpret the Gospels. Is it scientifically possible to rise from the dead? Was a virgin birth possible two thousand years ago? It is no wonder that Christianity in the West is struggling and the young discard it in droves. It is amazing that my daughter is taught 'scientific' evolution at a Catholic school and then in religion that this 'wafer of bread' is God, when every scientific test humanly possible denies it is anything but a wafer.

Another problem is the position taken on the flood. A local event you say? Why did Noah spend one hundred and twenty years building an ark capable of carrying over five hundred standard rail carriages of cargo, when all he had to do was strap on a backpack and walk to higher ground. This idea tells me that there was more than one way to be saved from the flood.

As for the promise of the rainbow (Gen. 9:15), God has already broken that, as there have been thousands of local floods with millions of lives lost since Noah. The rainbow is meaningless if the flood did not cover the then earth. Why did Noah have to take anything on the ark at all, let alone birds? Also, why is the legend of a deluge in the history of every culture on earth, not to mention the

presence of billions of dead things buried in rock layers laid down by water all over the earth?

Then we come to the future. Will the judgement of the earth be a local event? Perhaps God will only destroy the West. Will God take another sixteen billion years to create the new earth? As death and disease was a part of the original creation, will it be part of the new? Why is death called the last enemy? Why are we all living with the hope of a soon second coming? God waited billions of years for his first appearance, perhaps he will wait a million or so for his second. Or maybe it is all a metaphor for our rising along the evolutionary tree and we will solve our own problems.

Why did Jesus say, that in the beginning of creation, God made them male and female? There were no sexes in the beginning. It seems the idea of evolution has caught the Holy Spirit completely by surprise. Why do New Testament writers quote Genesis as though it was literal. Did God deceive them into believing it to be literal and was going to wait and let Twentieth Century science liberate us from superstition?

While on the subject of science, I believe science to be a system to prove things by repeatable experiments in the present. This is the science that put men on the moon. To look at rocks or dead things and project backwards in time where there are no witness, is not science, but conjecture that is always interpreted by an already-held world view.

The Scripture says I am to love my God with all my heart, soul, strength and mind. My mind tells me if Genesis can be reinterpreted by pressure from other areas of study, so too can the rest of Scripture. It is disturbing that I am only meant to start believing the Bible as fact, from Genesis chapter twelve on.

I know the position is taken that the Bible is a book of how to be saved and not one of science. But it is also a book of history and gives us a reason why we need a Saviour. Scholars have admitted that any reading of Genesis gives the idea of six literal days and it is only in the light of mod-

ern science that we are to believe it is some kind of allegory.

I am working on shift when the GNU Seminar is in Brisbane this year, but I am not sure that I would go anyway. Perhaps you should read some of 'Answers in Genesis' literature, where hundreds of academics and masters in their field, believe in a young earth and no death before Adam.

I recall late last year there was an uproar in Britain from leading evolutionists, when Ken Ham spoke on creation, and a local Bishop said on radio that evolution does not destroy faith, but rather builds it. Richard Dawkins commented that it might have been better if they had shut up and left it to the Bishops to stop youth being exposed to young-earth creation ideas. Have you read John Templeton's 'Farewell to God?' It was this issue that destroyed his faith.

I will leave you with a new poem: 'What says the scientist, the blessed scientist, this my only question be. The teaching of Scripture so often misleads me, what says the scientist to me?'

Yours in Christ

T. W. QLD.

Dear T

About the concerns you raised. Yes, GNU will discuss Genesis at the Seminar this year. This is not part of a campaign in which we have decided to become pseudo-experts in science rather than witnesses to the Gospel.

Dr Ford has had some discussions on the topic which I think you alluded to. Those were not organised by GNU, though we have stocked the tapes etc. for any who may be interested in them. I am responsible for the choice of topic for this years Seminar and the reason I did so, is because I am aware of increasing discussion around the world. I do not suppose to know everything there is to know on the subject, but my reading has taught me that there are thousands of men and women with faith in God, Scripture and Christ, who have a different view on Genesis to the one I grew up with. They may be right or wrong, but they do not so believe without evidence.

Two streams of investigation involved are science and theology—*itself involving the scientific disciplines of history, languages, archaeological and cultural studies. Both science and theology can be wrong. Honesty is necessary in both and where there are mistakes, they should be acknowledged or there is no way forward.*

What I am hoping for, by having a meeting on this topic, is to encourage those who love the Gospel, to respect and accept many who love it just as they do, but cannot honestly accept rigid literalism applied to Genesis. I believe the Gospel itself calls for us to do this. Many fine men and women are attracted to Christ, but they are kept from church membership because of these issues. I do not think they should be.

My own views on Genesis are slightly different to what they were ten years ago, but I do not think I am less a Christian because of it. I understand and respect varying views. No matter what side of the debate about Genesis one is on, there are puzzles and intellectual difficulties.

I think there is much that we don't know and a great deal that we will never know while here on earth. In the interim, there is need for humility. We shall often have to repent of our opinions.

God bless you.

Yours in Christ

RON.

Welcome Strangers

'Remember to welcome strangers, because some who have done this have welcomed angels, without knowing it.' (Hebrews 13:2)

*Love, compassion, caring
and time;*

*Share with a stranger and
be in line*

*For abounding joy which
comes from giving,
Mirror the gospel style of living.*

—Jennifer Saunders
(The Next Step magazine).

Body, Soul And Spirit

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF IN THE AFTERLIFE

The Gospel and the State of the Dead

The Gospel of the Kingdom is about God's antidote for sin. The very basis of this gospel, proclaimed by the early Church, was that man's greatest enemy—death, the end result of sin—has been conquered by Christ (1 Cor. 15:20-26; 2 Tim. 2:8).

Jesus wasn't just victorious over the beginning of sin—its power to tempt—but also over the end of sin—its ultimate power to destroy. 'Our Saviour, Christ Jesus ... has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel' (2 Tim. 1:10).

The essence of this gospel is that 'Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; that he was buried, [and] that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures' (1 Cor. 15:1-4). By his death, Jesus atoned for sin and by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus revealed that he has conquered sin's result—the second death—which is final and total separation from God.⁴³ Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, the gates of hades⁴⁴ no longer prevail over the faithful dead (Matt. 16:18). That is the Good News or Gospel.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:16-19, that without Christ's resurrection, our 'faith is futile' and 'all who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost.' For the New Testament believer, it was the resurrection alone that would free them from hades.

The Corinthians may have believed that all was well with their dead: They had simply shed their

bodies and entered into some kind of final 'spiritual' existence. *No, says Paul, they are lost; they are perished forever!*⁴⁵

In Paul's understanding, there is *no* life apart from the body, he tells us plainly here in 1 Corinthians 15:16-19, that if there is no resurrection from the dead, then those who have died in Christ are eternally lost.

What Paul says here, leaves no room for belief in the existence of a spirit that goes to heaven after death, for he reveals that the Christian's only access to life after death is through the resurrection. He is quite unequivocal in this matter—apart from the resurrection of the dead, there is no hope of future life for any Christian.

The gospel is about the victory of life over death. The New Testament reveals that the resurrection of Jesus from the dead—not the departure of the spirit at death—constituted that victory.

If it is true that people have immortal spirits or souls that go to heaven when they die, then what victory over the grave does Jesus' empty tomb offer them? *If the fullness of life continues in the spirit after death, would it have been any great loss for Christians if Jesus had not risen from the dead?*

If Jesus' resurrection from the dead did not demonstrate God's unique victory over death, then it wasn't essential for our salvation. Either Jesus' resurrection from the dead demonstrated the real and only victory over spiritual death, or it didn't. Eternal life is either consum-

mated in the resurrection of the dead, or it isn't. If Jesus' resurrection from the dead was not God's declaration that, through the cross, eternal life is consummated in a resurrected body, what was its significance? This is a question that demands an answer from all who believe that death, not the resurrection, is the gateway to eternity.

The powerful message of Jesus' empty tomb—the triumph of the Christian gospel⁴⁶—has been fudged by the counterfeit gospel of Greek dualism, which teaches that everyone has an immortal spirit, regardless of whether Christ died for them or not. The time has come to move out of the ranks behind Plato and line up behind Jesus of Nazareth. Through his resurrection from the dead, Jesus conquered death and disclosed how eternal life would be consummated in all who have been saved by his death (1 Peter 1:3-4; 3:21).

By his death and resurrection, Jesus potentially robbed Satan of his power and his followers (John 12:31-33). The most important thing Satan could do to regain a measure of his lost power and following, would be for him to diminish the benefits of Jesus' death and resurrection. He has been able to do this by fudging the benefits of the gospel, through the Church's acceptance of Greek dualism as a fundamental Christian belief.

Because Greek dualism teaches that we don't die at death, but continue life in the realm of the spirit, multitudes no longer see Jesus' death as a necessary price for

Ritchie Way

life after death.⁴⁷ Because Greek dualism teaches that we already have immortal spirits, the resurrection to eternal life is no longer seen as the real victory over death. If there was any truth in Greek dualism, Paul might have written, 'Where, Oh death is your victory? Where, Oh death is your sting? Thanks be to God! He has revealed this victory to us through Zoroaster and Plato.'

The empty tomb points to the resurrection of the body as constituting God's victory over sin and death, not to the flight of the spirit to heaven above. Jesus went to heaven, not as a soul or a spirit, but in his resurrected body. If postmortem existence in the spirit is a reality, then it is strange that Paul's message to the Greek Corinthians on life after death contains not a word about it.

In his own death and resurrection Jesus—the ideal man—has revealed to us the truth of the matter concerning life after death. Paul declared that Adam gave us death when he robbed us of eternal life, but Jesus, *at his coming*, will give us immortality through the resurrection from the dead (1 Cor. 15:20-23; 53). The fact that the gospel encourages us to seek immortality (Romans 2:7) through union with the Immortal One (1 John 5:11-12), reveals that we are mortal apart from Christ. People don't spend time seeking for something that is already in their possession.

Did Jesus go to Hell when he Died?

There is one other factor which is absolutely crucial to a correct understanding of the nature of Jesus' death. The Bible says, 'Christ died for the ungodly' (Rom. 5:6) and 'Christ died for us' (Rom. 5:8), also, in 2 Corinthians 5:21 we are told, 'God made Him who had no sin, to be sin for us.'⁴⁸ Now if Jesus took our sin and died in our

place, then the death that he died would have to be equal to the death that sinners will die. Either Jesus 'bore our sins' in their totality (1 Peter 2:24) or he didn't. As the Bible is clear that Jesus paid the full price of my sin on the cross, this must be the basis for evaluating the nature of the death that he died.

Now if unrepentant sinners have immortal spirits that continue their existence after death in hell, then the *only* way that Jesus could fully pay for the sins of his people, would be for him to endure the torments of hell for all eternity, in their place. If, upon the cross, Jesus took upon himself all the sins of those he redeemed and accepted the fullness of their punishment, then, according to those who believe that humans have immortal spirits, he should even now be enduring the agonies of hellfire along with those who refused to accept his sacrifice on their behalf.

The gospel proclaims that on the cross, Jesus was judged and condemned, not for his own sins, but for ours, and not just for a portion of our sins, but for the total amount. There are two options here, **1.** The wages of sin is the second death and on the cross Jesus died that death, fully believing he was about to be annihilated for our sins⁴⁹ or **2.** The wages of sin is eternal torment and when Jesus died, he went straight to hell to remain there forever and ever, enduring unending agony and suffering on our behalf.

This second option is, of course, quite contrary to the testimony of Scripture, which tells us that Jesus is not in hell, but in heaven above at the right hand of the Father (Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3). A correct understanding of the gospel therefore, leaves us with no alternative but to accept the fact that people do not have immortal spirits that continue their existence in another realm after death.

The challenge remains for those who continue to insist that spirits go either to heaven or hell after death, to explain how Jesus paid the price for the sins of his people. If the wages of sin is not death, but unending torment in hellfire, when, where and how did Jesus fully pay this price on behalf of those he redeemed from this penalty? ♦

End Notes:

43. The death that Jesus died on the cross was both the first and the second death.

44. In the Greek thought-world, the gates of hades were guarded by the fearsome Cerberus. Jesus declares that, no matter how well guarded the gates of hades might be, and no matter how strong they might be, they will not prevail against anyone who, like Peter, confesses his faith in Jesus. All who believe in Jesus will be raised up again from the dead.

45. Paul Beasley-Murray, *The Message of the Resurrection* (Inter-varsity Press, 2000) p129.

46. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 2 Timothy 2:8.

47. Some make a distinction between natural immortality, which they claim everyone has but which results only in an eternity in hell, and spiritual immortality, which is received by faith in Jesus and which results in an eternity in heaven. Such a belief stumbles over two blocks: firstly, nowhere in the Bible is there a single reference to an immortal soul or spirit, and secondly, the distinction between natural and spiritual immortality is a distinction that is foreign to Scripture.

48. See also Rom. 4:25; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 2:9; 9:15; 10: 10-12.

49. Jesus was raised from the dead because our sin was *on* him, but not *in* him. In other words, because he hadn't been stained by our sin, the Father was able to raise him up to life again. ♦



In Memoriam

Dr Raymond F. Cottrell, long-time member of AAF (Association of Adventist Forums), being a seventeen-time speaker of the San Diego Chapter, passed to his rest at his home in Calimesa, California, on Sunday January 11, age ninety-one, after an extended bout with pneumonia and its complications.

He participated in his final

AAFSD presentation last February, by fielding questions after his paper, *The Investigative Judgment: Asset or Liability*, was presented by Larry Christoffel.

Without any doubt, from 1980-2002 Dr Cottrell did more to shape the focus and format of the San Diego Chapter than any other individual.

Bonnie Dwyer has posted a most appropriate tribute to this gentleman scholar on the *Spectrum* website: (www.spectrummagazine.org)

The memorial service was held on February 1 at 3:30 pm at the Yucaipa SDA Church California, USA.

—Associations of Adventist forums (San Diego, California.)

Pastoral Director: ron@goodnewsunlimited.org.au
Magazine/Newsletter: patricia@goodnewsunlimited.org.au
The Good Newsletter: patandroger@netspeed.com.au
Accounts/orders: carolyn@goodnewsunlimited.org.au
Secretary/Treasurer: dennis@goodnewsunlimited.org.au
Chairman: spider55@optusnet.com.au
FreeEzine: lionelhartley@bigpond.com.au
GNU Website design: ray@yabbagold.com
GNU USA: www.goodnewsunlimited.org

GNU USA: www.goodnewsunlimited.org
GNU Aust: www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au
Des Ford: www.desford.org.au
Gillian Ford: www.gillianford.com

We invite your comments on our pages.

EMAIL



WEBSITES

Ugly Is Beautiful



Inherited a Dendrobium orchid and didn't know a thing about them, so I was worried when a 'lump' formed on one of the thick, ugly stems.

I thought it must have a disease and ignored it, thinking that

if it died I would throw it away.

Orchid lovers reading this would be horrified, but that is me, if something fails or needs a lot of attention, then I am too busy to fuss with it.

So imagine my utter surprise as the 'lump' on my orchid got bigger until one morning I found it had turned into what looked something like a bunch of grapes and in no time at all the whole 'disfiguration' became a gorgeous, cascading show of yellow mini-orchids. It looked breathtaking and quite a lesson to me.

Gillian Ford's Website.



Gillian Ford is a physician-trained hormonal consultant with over 20

years experience. She is the author of the book, *Listening To Your Hormones*. For many years Gillian has worked in the USA advising women on hormonal problems. Gillian is now online in Australia. If you have a question about hormones, she is counseling over the net.

Gillian's website:

www.gillianford.com

We sometimes view people who are 'different', in the same way as I viewed the orchid. We don't understand why they are the way they are, and so we are ready to quickly dismiss them from our thoughts and lives. I teach Scripture in government schools and often come across children who behave strangely. As I get to know them and bond with them, I often learn why they do what they do.

It is a good thing that the God who made us, is not impatient with people like me—ready to cast me aside if I don't perform as expected—as I was with my orchid.

He lovingly thinks all the time about us, even to the extent, that over two thousand years ago, he temporarily gave up his deity to die for the sins of the world.

His death back then covered the sins of every person who will ever live. He rose to life after three days and ever since has wanted us to accept his gracious act—by loving him and those around us. When we do this, we will see people in a totally different light—just like I now see my orchid.

—Pat Jones, Bega Presbyterian Church.

Old Rags For New

Early one morning I heard a strange sound. I looked out my window and saw a man, young and strong, pushing an old cart full of rags and clothes. As he passed, he called out *'Rags, rags, new rags for old.'*

I watched as he stopped in front of a woman huddled in a doorway, trying to escape the cold morning air. Her eyes were puffed and wet with tears as she remembered the violence of the night before. In her hand was a dirty old handkerchief, stained with tears and dirt.

I looked with interest as the Ragman took something from the cart and gently knelt beside her. *'Rags'* he said, *'new rags for old.'* With that, he gently took the handkerchief out of her hand and wiped the tears from her cheeks and placed a beautiful silk scarf around her neck.

Her eyes widened in awe as the Ragman stood up and continued pushing his cart. She had stopped crying and on her face was a smile as she gazed at the scarf.

Then, as the Ragman pushed his cart, he did a strange thing, he put the stained handkerchief to his face and began to weep; to sob as grievously as the woman had done, his shoulders shaking.

'This is a wonder,' I breathed to myself as I went out to follow the sobbing man.

'Rags! Rags! New for old!'

In a little while, when the sky showed grey behind the rooftops, the Ragman came upon a girl whose head was wrapped in a bandage, her eyes looked lost and empty. Blood soaked her bandage, a single line of blood ran down her cheek. The tall Ragman looked at the girl with pity and took a lovely yellow bonnet from his cart.

'Give me your rag' he said, *'and I will give you this bonnet.'* The girl could only gaze at him while he loosened the bandage, removed it and tied it on his own head. He then took the beautiful bonnet and tied it on her head.

I was amazed at what I saw, for with the bandage went the wound! Against his brow ran a darker, more substantial blood—his own.

'Rags, rags, new rags for old' cried the sobbing, bleeding Ragman.

The sun high in the sky hurt my eyes, the Ragman seemed in a hurry now as I followed him.

'Are you going to work?' he asked a man who leaned against a telephone-pole. The man shook his head.

The Ragman pressed him, *'Do you have a job?'*

'Are you crazy?' sneered the man. He pulled away from the pole, revealing the flat right sleeve of his jacket, the cuff stuffed loosely in the pocket. He had no arm on his right side.

'So' said the Ragman, *'give me your jacket and I'll give you mine.'*

Such quiet authority in his voice!

The one-armed man took off his jacket, so did the Ragman, and I trembled at what I saw, for as the Ragman

put on the man's jacket, the right sleeve was flat against the Ragman's side, and when the other man put on the Ragman's coat he had two good arms.!

'Go to work' the Ragman said.

Sometime later, the Ragman found a man, drunk, lying unconscious beneath an old army blanket. He took the blanket, wrapped it around himself and left some new clothes for the drunk.

Now I had to run to keep up with the Ragman. Though he was weeping and bleeding freely from his forehead, he pushed the cart with one arm, stumbling and staggering, he fell again and again, but he managed to continue until he came to the city limits and beyond.

The Ragman eventually came to a land fill—a garbage dump outside the town. I wanted to help him, but I hung back, hiding. He climbed a hill and with tormented labour and cleared a small space. Sighing, he sat down. Then pillowing his head on the handkerchief and jacket, he covered his bones with the old army blanket . . . and he died.

How I cried to witness that death! I slumped in an abandoned car wreck and wailed, mourning as one who had no hope—because by following him throughout the day, I had come to love the Ragman. Every other face faded in the wonder of this man. I had begun to cherish him, but he had died!

I sobbed myself to sleep. I slept through Friday night and Saturday, then on Sunday morning I was awakened by a violence.

Light, pure light, demanding, pure light slammed against my sour face. I blinked and saw the greatest wonder of all, there was the Ragman folding the blanket carefully. He was alive! The scar showed on his forehead; there was no sign of sorrow and all the rags he had gathered were shiny clean.

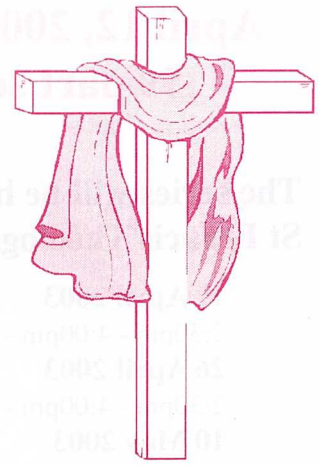
I lowered my head and trembling, walked up to the Ragman telling him my name with shame—for I was a sorry figure next to him. Then I felt compelled to take off my clothes and say to him with yearning, *'Dress me too, please.'*

He dressed me. My Lord, he put new rags on me, the Ragman, the Ragman, the Christ!

In a world of unfairness and injustice, our Christ became a mere Ragman—a nobody—who lost his life in order to save our souls. He took our injustices, our hurts, our pains and he gave us hope! He Gave us salvation!

With God, Jesus met the meaningless of life and turned it into a glorious hope-filled destiny, life forever with our Creator.

—Author unknown.



April 12, 2003 Dr Ford will be commencing a six part series on the book of Romans.

All welcome

The series will be hosted by the Christian Lawyers Society at St Francis Theological College, 233 Milton Road, Brisbane.



12 April 2003

2:30pm - 4:00pm - *Part 1*

26 April 2003

2:30pm - 4:00pm - *Part 2*

10 May 2003

2:30pm - 4:00pm - *Part 3*



24 May 2003

2:30pm - 4:00pm - *Part 4*

14 June 2003

2:30pm - 4:00pm - *Part 5*

28 June 2003

2:30pm - 4:00pm - *Part 6*

Faith Tested and Tried

'The Inside Story' December 2002.

My Name is Darren, I am currently in the Sir David Longland Correctional Centre west of Brisbane, in sunny Queensland.

I have been a Christian since 1987 when I was born again. Despite many ups and downs in my life, my belief in God has continued, even though it wavered on occasions.

I was arrested in the year 2000 for a most hideous crime and my pleas of innocence have been disregarded with utter contempt and disbelief from 'the powers that be'. But despite all the evidence to the contrary, I was found guilty, after a couple of attempts and two trials.

My faith over the last couple of years has been tested on many occasions and has actually grown stronger with every setback. The lowest point I got with the feeling of my faith leaving me, was after witnessing all the evil and the lies in the court that convicted me.

Seeing all the untruths told on the witness stand after those people took an oath on the Bible, showed me that the presence of God-fearing people is few and far between.

Not only were lies and untruths claimed as fact by witnesses, but also from the prosecution. I felt that

the lies would be uncovered and God would not let them pass, but the jury came back with a guilty verdict.

At that point my heart sank and I felt as if God and Jesus had left me and let evil overtake me. I have never felt so alone in all my life. My life seemed to be over and there appeared to be no hope. I was taken from the court and returned to the watch-house and to the police.

After that I was returned to SDL and back to my cell, where I had an overpowering urge to read my Bible—not just anywhere in the Bible either! I was directed to read Revelation 2:10 'Do not fear any of these things which you are about to suffer. Indeed the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life.'

After reading that part of the Lord's Word I felt overjoyed and my faith grew stronger. God knew the devil was working in the court with his lies, but God will overcome and I will triumph!

When I returned to the prison a lot of people commented to me, questioning my faith in God, saying things like 'See where believing in God got you—nowhere' and 'Come over to the dark side, it's fun!'

No thanks! God loves me and my faith and trust are forever present within me.

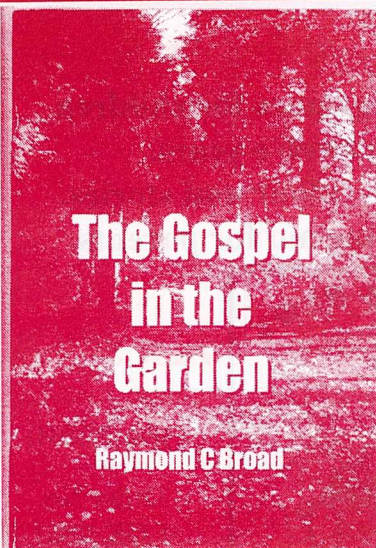
So while I await my appeal, I pray for the lost souls in my unit and ask the Father to fill their hearts with his Holy Spirit. My faith is tested still, but my strength is from my love for Jesus, my Almighty God, and it will never be defeated!

—Printed with permission.

OPAL FM 89.7
LIGHTNING RIDGE NSW
Phn. 0268 292976 (Tony Fitzgerald).

RADIO

RADIO RHEMA
TAMWORTH NSW
Phn. 02 67612360
(Karen Barter).



28pp Booklet
Raymond Broad, a New Zealander, was a school teacher for many years teaching Bible and Manual Arts.

The Gospel in the Garden

Raymond C Broad

Traditional attempts to find the Gospel promise at the time of 'the fall' centre around God's announcement to the serpent about some bruising between himself and Jesus. Although these promises open up the possibility of hope sometime in the future, they do little to explain to me how I can benefit from them. I would like to suggest that the system of taking a soul from despair to assurance, is more clearly explained by the events at the fall— by what happened, rather than by what was said. This can be done by taking the simple principle that 'the way out of a mess is to follow back through the way into it.' So let's pull to pieces the process that damned us.'

Included with *The Gospel in the Garden* is a set of 4 Audio tapes

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1: How were we Lost and Found?
The Universality of the Gospel
is Everything | 3: The Law of the Gospel.
Believe - Plus Nothing. |
| 2: When God's Heart Broke.
I'm OK, Your OK. | 4: Old Covenant, New Covenant
The Message is the Medium. |

\$19.95 (Plus PP&H)

O/N. 2RB0005

Thank you for Anonymous

Tithe & Donations

January \$100.00

February \$100.00 and \$12.00

FreEzine

You are invited to subscribe to the free online magazine, FreEzine, published monthly by Dr Lionel Hartley: <http://www.writers.net/writers/8067> This magazine features selections from Good News Australia, The Good Newsletter, snippets of Christian news from around the world, advance information on GNU seminars, book promotions, etc. Also included are items of Christian humour, recipes, book & Christian website reviews, and articles of interest to Christians. FreEzine is available free of charge.

To subscribe, send an email to:

lionelhartley@bigpond.com with *subscribe* in the subject line and tell us where you heard about FreEzine. You can unsubscribe anytime.

A convenient way to support this Gospel outreach on a monthly basis.

**Visa
Bankcard
Mastercard.**



Order form March 2003

Cat No.	Title	Cost	Total
1GK0001	Good News For Kids set.....	20.00 set.....	
2RB0005	The Gospel in the Garden.....	19.95 set.....	
2SAB004	Science and the Bible audios.....	20.00 set.....	
3SA0001	Science and the Bible video.....	17.50 each.....	
2RN0001	Radio cassette Catalogue.....	0.00 each.....	
	New Subs. Tape Of month 2003.....	75.00 per annum.....	
	Free Good News Resource Catalogue	0.00 each.....	
	Subs. to GNA Mag. & News/L	25.00 Aust & 35.00 pa, O'seas.....	
	Donation to GNU outreach		
			TOTAL

Orders under \$40.00 - \$4.95 PP&H (on books only)

Orders over \$40.00 - \$7.95 PP&H (on books only)

Name.....

Address.....Postcode.....

Phone

Fax.....

eMail.....

Bankcard/Mastercard/Visa no.

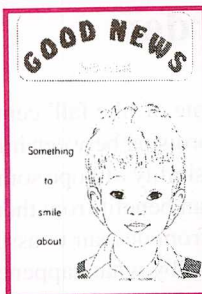
SignatureExpiry

Good News Unlimited PO Box 6788 (2/54-60 Industry Drive)

South Tweed Heads NSW 2486

Phn. 07 55245040 Fax 0755245900

Email: goodnews@coolgold.com.au

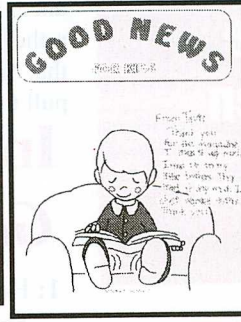
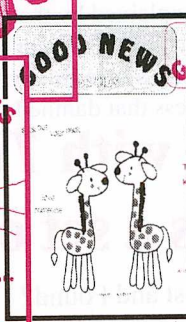
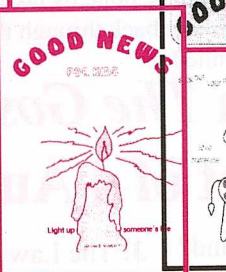


Good News For Kids

A Set of twenty magazines for children from seven to twelve years.

Puzzles, pictures to colour and stories.

A Christian teaching aid for parents.



Just \$20.00

the set of twenty
(plus PP&H)

Order No.
1 GK 0001

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

Print Post approved - pp606803/0005
May be opened for postal inspection

Returned mail: PO Box 6788
South Tweed Heads NSW 2486.

**SURFACE
MAIL**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**

Changed your address? Please advise of any change of address to ensure regular copies of *The Good Newsletter*. Please return old label and your new address details.

Editor:.....Roger Jones
Typesetter:.....Patricia Tedman
Printer:.....Spartan Press WA

Good News Unlimited is an evangelical, nonprofit organisation, dedicated to proclaiming the everlasting gospel. GNU is not a church, and does not seek to proselytise, but does believe in and encourage local church involvement. The ministry of GNU includes radio presentations, preaching appointments, public seminars and the dispersal of audio and video cassettes, also literature, emphasising the atonement of Christ.

Editor:.....Roger Jones..... 07 55245040
Chairman William Sinclair 08 93610867
Pr Ron Allen:.....07 55245040

Directory

Zone 1	Western Australia	William Sinclair	08 9458 5469	Fax 08 93610867
Zone 2	Sth Aust. Vic. Tas	Bruce Johansen	03 5381 1330	
Zone 3	Sth NSW	Roger Jones	07 5524 5040	Fax 07 55245040
Zone 4	Greater Sydney	Rolf Kempf	02 4983 1132	
Zone 5	Raymond Tce-Taree	John Beumer	02 6553 5561	
Zone 6	NE NSW	Aenid Pettingill	07 5523 3479	
		David Sandercock	02 6687 8328	
		Bruce Tulloch	07 5535 5329	

SE QLD

GNU Aust: 2/54-60 Industry Drive, Sth Tweed Heads NSW 2486. (PO Box 6788)

Phone: 07 55245040 **Fax:** 07 55245900 **eMail:** goodnews@coolgold.com.au

Website: www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au

USA Office: 11710 Education St. Auburn CA 95603 - 2499 USA.

Website: www.goodnewsunlimited.org

Canadian Office: 57 Virgilwood Drive, Willowdale, Ontario. M2R 2B5 Canada.

NZ Office: 52 Kohekohe St., New Lynn Auckland 7 NZ.

Free six months trial subscription to *Good News Australia* and *The Good Newsletter* for new readers, please send name and address of friends, neighbours or relatives who you think would enjoy these publications.